

# MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

Published quarterly by the Historical Committee of Mennonite General Conference at Scottdale, Pennsylvania, and distributed to the members of the Mennonite Historical Association. **Editor:** Irvin B. Horst; **Office Editor:** John A. Hostetler; **Associate Editors:** Harold S. Bender, Ernest R. Clemens, Melvin Gingerich, Ira D. Landis, Herman Ropp, John W. Snyder, Nelson Springer, Grant Stoltzfus, John C. Wenger, Samuel S. Wenger. Dues for regular membership (\$1.50 per year) or for sustaining membership (\$5.00 or more annually) may be sent to the treasurer of the Association, Ira D. Landis, R. # 1, Bareville, Pa. Articles and news items should be addressed to the editor, Irvin B. Horst, Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Va.

VOL. XX

JANUARY, 1959

No. 1

## The 1835 Meeting of Virginia Mennonite Conference

By ERNEST G. GEHMAN

The early meetings of Virginia Mennonite Conference before 1860 were either not recorded or the minutes are not known to exist. The one exception to this, however, is the record of the meeting held April 10, 1835, presumably at Weaver's Church near Harrisonburg. The printed collections of the Virginia Conference Minutes, in the editions of 1884, 1910, 1939, and 1950, have without exception included a brief report of the 1835 meeting as an English translation from a German record.

Recently an account in German of the 1835 meeting has come to light. It occurs on four leaves of a small ledger booklet which also includes some deacon accounts for the years 1835-1857. Unfortunately the second leaf of the conference report is missing. No evidence is present to indicate the authorship of the records in the booklet. A label on the back of the book bears the name of Jacob R. Hildebrand (1816-1899) of Augusta County, who was a bishop in the Upper District after the Civil War. Another label bears the name of Michael Shank (1829-1905), Dayton, Virginia, who was a deacon in the Middle District at about the same time. No doubt both of these brethren possessed the book at various times, but they were young, unordained persons at the time of the 1835 meeting. How the book came into their possession is not known. A few years ago it was given to Harry A. Brunk, who has turned it over to the Historical Library and Archives at Eastern Mennonite College.

It is not altogether clear whether or not this was the text from which the English translation was made in 1884. If so, the missing leaf was present at that time. In any case, the translation was a very free one. There is no evidence in the German text, for example, that the meeting was held at Weaver's. We may assume that the meeting was an official one of Virginia Conference because of the representation present  
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Mennonites from the Island of Kampen, the Netherlands, on their way to church. The woman appears in the native dress of this region, but the man is dressed after the custom of the Swiss Brethren, a group hav-

ing settled at Kampen in the 18th century. This picture is one in a series of Dutch costume prints drawn either the end of the 18th or the beginning of the 19th century.



## 1835 MEETING

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and the nature of the proceedings. Also it was held in April, the customary time for the spring conference. In the German language, however, it is simply named a "Pretiger Zusammen Kunft."

A transcription of the German text follows below, succeeded by a translation into English. It is interesting to note that in Virginia, as was elsewhere the custom among Mennonites in America, the deacon office was designated by the German "ältester," which can only be translated literally as "elder."

## German Text

Rackinham Cauntj Virginien den 10 april 1835 War unsere Pretiger Zusammen Kunft Wo die folgenden Diener bey einander Waren nämlich Abraham Neuschwander Peter Burckholter Daniel Guth Friederich Roth Benjamin Wenger und Marty Kindig Von augusti Cauntj und David Hütwohl ältester die alten Brüder Henrich Schenck und Michael Stauer und Johannes Faber Von augusti Cauntj haben Wegen schwächlichkeit und Kranckheit nicht Könen beywohnen der Bruter Daniel Schohwalter hat auch Wegen Kranckheit seines Weibs nicht Könen beywohnen der Bruter Antoni Roth ältester War auch nicht mit uns

Wir die benahmten die mit einander Versammelt Waren . . . (leaf missing) der armen und bedürftigen glieder oder Wo sonst etwas zu bezahlen ist das zu der gemeine gehört so soll es alle mahl mit der gemeine ihrem Rath gethan Werden man ist jetzt in der hofnung die gemeine Wird mit diesem unserem Vorschlag Vereinigt sein dan es ist nichts neues oder unschriftmäsiges dan Wir Könen Viel spuren und anweisungen finden das es Von jezeiten fer eine Christliche ordnung und gebrauch War steuer zu samlen Wo es noth War Christus hat dord gesagt arme habt ihr alle zeit bey euch und Wan ihr Wollet so Könet ihr ihnen gutes Thun Wir lesen in der apostel geschicht im 11ten Cap das unter den Jüngern beschloss ein jeglicher nach dem er Vermochte zu senden eine Handreichung den Brüdern die in Judäa Wohnten Wie sie dan auch Thäten und schickten es zu den ältesten durch die hand Barnabas und Sauls erste Corinther am 16 lesen Wir Wie Paulus die Corinther angewissen hat Wie sie Thun sollen und sagt also Von der steuer aber die den Heiligen Wie ich den gemeinen in galatien geordnet also Thut auch ihr auf einen jeglichen Sabbather lege bey sich selbst ein jeglicher unter euch und samle Was ihn gut dünckt auf das nicht Wan

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## A Plea For Unity

By IRA D. LANDIS

Granted that Nabuchodonosor, Nabolassar, and Nabopolassar are the titles of the kings of Babylonia, as Pharoah is the titular designation for the rulers of Egypt (then two or more names need to be added to each after the title).<sup>1</sup> Granted that the city of Cologne, to please the Dutch, is changed to Keulen, and to please the Germans remains Köln; that Basel, to be neighborly, allows the French to call it Bale; and that the cosmopolitan city of the League of Nations can be called Geneva (German), Genf (French) and Genova (Italian). But why must our martyrs and earlier leaders be tortured similarly and all Mennonite historians and students be given a ride on a jack rabbit whenever they study our precious history!

The Bishops Jonnie Graybill, Benedict Hershey, and Jacob N. Brubacher can be written without a sic. Even Henry Funk, in the Franconia History, is usually Heinrich Funk (p. 260) and Heinrich Funk to both Cassel<sup>2</sup> and Pennypacker.<sup>2</sup>

Jacob de Roore in *Martyrs' Mirror* (pp. 774, 775) is Jacob the Weaver (*Ibid.* 784, 788). Jan Wouters in Van Braght's classic (pp. 898, 905, 919, 920, 922, 924) is Jan Wouters Van Kuyck (p. 899a), Jan Van Kuyck Wouters (p. 899b), John Van Kuyck (pp. 905a, 911), Jan Wouters Kuyck (pp. 909b, 916, 920) and Jan Wouters Van Kuyck (p. 924). That makes six different names in fifteen references to the same man. Since the *Martyrs' Mirror* is often reprinted, a more readable copy, probably a new English translation, replacing the Joseph Sohm translation of three-quarters of a century ago, is vitally needed.

Who is Sicke Freerks? *Martyrs' Mirror* calls him Sicke Snyder (p. 441). John Horsch says Sicke Freericks Snyder (p. 187) and Sicke Snyder (p. 189). Samuel Geiser says Sicke Frericks and C. Henry Smith knows Sicke Freerks the tailor. Menno Simons in *The Complete Writings* also adds Sicke Snijder (p. 668). Cassel assures us it is Sicke Schneider (p. 7). *The Mennonite Encyclopedia* does not use his name in the first three volumes.

Then the Waterlander who wrote the book, still popular among the Amish, *The Wandering Soul*, is in *The Mennonite Encyclopedia* Jan Philip Schabalje; in the *Mennonite Historical Bulletin*, October, 1957, Jan Philip Schabaelje; in the *Franconia Mennonite History* (pp. 300,

316) and *The Story of the Mennonites* (p. 211) J. P. Schabalje. Then in Horsch's *Mennonites in Europe* (p. 248) and *Mennonite Piety* by Friedmann (pp. 111-115), we meet John Philip Schabalje.

The record, however, goes to the author of the *Enchiridion*, an early Dutch Anabaptist leader (1504-1568). Take your choice of the following:

1. D. Philips, *Wander sendige der Predicanten* c. 1559 (Copy in the Schwenkfelder Library).
2. Dietrich Phillips—*Martyrs' Mirror*, p. 686.
3. Dirk Philipps—Cassel, *Geschichte der Mennoniten*, p. 9; also English, pp. 12, 56, 57.
4. Dietrick Phillips—*Martyrs' Mirror*, p. 788.
5. Dirrick Philips—*Martyrs' Mirror*, p. 1080.
6. Dirk Philip  
—*Complete Works of Menno Simons*, II, p. 96.  
—*Taufgesinnte oder Mennoniten*, A. Brons.
7. Dirk Philips  
—*Story of the Mennonites*, C. Henry Smith.  
—*Complete Writings of Menno Simons*, p. 480, 35c.  
—*De Taufgesinnten Gemeinden*, Samuel Geiser.  
—*Mennonite Quarterly Review*, July 1957.  
—*Mennonite Historical Bulletin*, October 1957.  
—*Mennonite Life*, April 1953, pp. 70-75.  
—*Menno Simons' Life and Writings*, p. 23.  
—*Centennial History of Mennonites of Illinois*, Harry F. Weber, p. 10.  
—*Religious Education and Mennonite Piety*, Paul R. Shelley, p. 21.  
—*Mennonite Encyclopedia*, in loco.
8. Dietrich Philip  
—*Mennonite Life*, April 1958, pp. 70-75.  
—*Complete Works of Menno Simons*, II, p. 96.
9. Dietrich Philips  
—*Mennonite Cyclopedic Dictionary*.  
—*Mennonite Handbook of Information*, L. J. Heatwole.  
—*Glimpses of Mennonite History*, Wenger, Index.  
—*Franconia Mennonite History*, p. 300.  
—*Mennonite Quarterly Review*, April 1958, p. 113.
10. Dirck Philip—*Mennonites in America*, C. Henry Smith.
11. Dirk Phillips—*Mennonite Church History*, Hartzler and Kauffman.

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<sup>1</sup> Prideaux, *The Old and New Testament Connected in the History of Jews*, I, pp. 53, 54.

<sup>2</sup> Cassel, *Mennonite History*, 1890, p. 93.



# News and Notes

**JOHN HORSCH CONTEST.** The judges for Class III of the John Horsch Mennonite History Essay Contest announced their decision to give the awards for 1957-58 to three students at the Christopher Dock Mennonite School. Ruth Landis won first prize with an essay titled, "History of the Salford Mennonite Church"; Evelyn K. Bechtel second, "The History and Growth of the Towamencin Mennonite Church"; and Anna Derstine third, "A History of the Souderton Church." Class III is open to high school students. The judges for Classes I and II did not grant any awards for the 1957-58 school year. Elsewhere in this issue of the *Bulletin* may be found the announcement of the Contest for the 1958-59 period.

**VAN DER SMISSEN LETTERS.** Professor L. W. Forster of the University College, London, England, has discovered in the University of Toronto Library a rich collection of Jacob Gysbert van der Smissen letters which were deposited there by Professor van der Smissen who taught German in Toronto at the beginning of the century. Among the letters addressed to van der Smissen were some from Lavater and Jung-Stilling. Mr. Forster also possesses a copy of *Annales Anabaptistici* written by Johann Heinrich Ott, a seventeenth century Zurich theologian, who was interested in the Anabaptists. Ott's unpublished travel diary mentions attendance at Anabaptist church services in Holland during the 1640's. M.G.

**NICKEL DIARY.** Katharine Nickel of Reedley, California, author of *Seed from the Ukraine*, spent several weeks in October at the Goshen College Mennonite Historical Library reading the extensive letters of her father, Johann F. Nickel, which appeared in the *Nebraska Ansiedler*, beginning in 1878 and continuing in the *Mennonitische Rundschau*. Miss Nickel possesses the unpublished diary of her father for the years 1875-80, beginning with his trip from Russia to America. M.G.

**EARLY AMISH HISTORY.** *History of the First Amish Mennonite Communities in America*, M.A. thesis by Grant M. Stoltzfus, was copied recently by multith process and made available by the Research Department of Eastern Mennonite College. The 112-page thesis covers the history of the Amish during the Colonial Period in America. It may be obtained for the price of \$2.50 per copy postpaid from the Research Department of Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Virginia. An article by Grant M. Stoltzfus, "Men-

nonites in the Mid-Twentieth Century," appeared in the October 1958 number of *Earnest Worker*, a Sunday school teachers' monthly of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.

**ARTICLES ABOUT THE AMISH.** Articles about the Amish occur rather frequently in national periodicals, often with little more than curiosity value. One of more import was in *The Wall Street Journal*, November 3, 1958, with the title, "Amish Security and Amish Freedom, Too." Security without freedom, the article states, is history's bitterest jest. It asks for some second thoughts about the arrests of Amish in Eastern Ohio who for religious scruples refuse to pay the Old Age and Survivors Insurance System levies. The September 27,

1958, *Maclean's* contained a major article on "Why the Amish Want No Part of Progress." The article contained excellent photographs.

**HISTORY OF THE BRETHREN.** A notable church history book off the press in 1958 was a 463-page, illustrated history of the early Church of the Brethren: Donald F. Durnbaugh, *European Origins of the Brethren*, The Brethren Press, Elgin, Illinois. The work represents the diligent and fruitful efforts of a young scholar to bring together all the European records of that church. Although the Brethren had their origins in the 18th century they had many contacts with the Mennonites in Germany, Switzerland, and Holland, as this book reveals.

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## John Horsch Mennonite History Essay Contest Sponsored by the Historical Committee of Mennonite General Conference—1958-59

**NAME:** The John Horsch Mennonite History Essay Contest

**LEVELS:** 1) "Class I": College Seniors and Postgraduates  
2) "Class II": College Freshmen, Sophomores and Juniors  
3) "Class III": High School Students

**PRIZES:** 1) College Seniors and Postgraduates  
1) \$10.00 2) MQR subscription, 2 years 3) MQR subscription, 1 year  
2) College Freshmen, Sophomores and Juniors:  
Same as for Seniors and Postgraduates  
3) High School Students:  
1) \$5.00 2) MHB subscription, 2 years 3) MHB subscription, 1 year

### REGULATIONS:

- 1) The papers may treat congregational or institutional histories, biographies of past or present Mennonite leaders, rise of special organizations or interests in the Mennonite Church, or any subject intimately related to the history of the Mennonite Church. The papers should do more than merely summarize an article on the same subject already in print. A variety of sources should be used for every essay.
- 2) Papers must be *either* neatly written in ink, one side only, with wide margins, *or* typed. Name and permanent mailing address on last page of essay. (If papers are typed, please double-space.)
- 3) Papers must be submitted to the first judge listed below for each category, by May 1, 1959.
- 4) Both the research reflected and the literary quality in evidence will be considered, with a relatively higher consideration being given to research as one moves up from Class III to Class I.

**JUDGES:** 1) Class I: Irvin B. Horst, Chairman, E.M.C., Harrisonburg, Virginia, Grant Stoltzfus and H. S. Bender  
Class II: J. A. Hostetler, Chairman, Menn. Pub. House, Scottsdale, Pa., Samuel S. Wenger and Ira D. Landis  
Class III: Melvin Gingerich, Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana, Gideon G. Yoder and Nelson Springer

This contest is sponsored by the Historical Committee to stimulate interest in our heritage of faith, to deepen our historical consciousness, and to strengthen church loyalty. It is named for John Horsch (1867-1941), outstanding Mennonite scholar and writer.



## A PLEA FOR UNITY

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12. Dietrich Philip  
—*Handbook* (Elkhart, 1910 edition), p. 132.  
—*Handbook* (Joseph Ehrenfried, 1811 edition).  
—*Glimpses of Mennonite History*, Wenger, p. 79.
13. Dirck Philips  
—*Mennonites in Europe*, John Horsch.  
—*Mennonite History*, 1927, Daniel Kauffman, pp. 42, 125.  
—*Franconia Mennonite History*, p. 316.  
—*Menno Simons Complete Writings*, p. 480, footnote.  
—*Glimpses of Mennonite History*, Wenger, pp. 16, 24, 25, 68.
14. Dirk Philipsz—*The Mennonite Encyclopedia*, II, p. 65.
15. Dirk Filips—*The Mennonite Encyclopedia*, II, p. 65.

Although a poor speller, one certainly should be able to write this man's name. Yet, no course on early Anabaptist history can detour him since he is important enough to have fifteen different treatments in twenty-eight authoritative sources in thirty-seven references in church history and literature.

Do we need a study conference about the nomenclature of church leaders? Should N. van der Zijpp and Ernst Crous be invited to agree too? Definitely, something should be done, in addition to writing *The Mennonite Encyclopedia*.<sup>3</sup> This writer pleads for unity, some agreement to replace the present state of confusion. We cannot change the cloudy past, but we should portend a fairer future.

<sup>3</sup> On the latter, *The Mennonite Encyclopedia* gives three renderings and to accentuate the confusion adds two new ones. As a Swiss or German leader, he does not need a Spanish or Dutch connotation and orthography, and if Dutch, let the Dutch speak. If American, adopt either the way he wrote it as authentic, or the way it has come down to us. But decide, and then ever thereafter let all lesser authorities concur.

## NEWS AND NOTES

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PENNSYLVANIA GERMAN MUSEUM. The Pittsburgh *Sun-Telegraph Pictorial Living*, October 5, 1958, contained a full page illustrated article by Dorothy Kantner on "New Museum Gets Historic Exhibits." The article features Dr. Alta Schrock's work as curator of the museum and executive director of the Springs Historical Society. The *Meyersdale Republican* has featured the Festival of the Springs community, which opened October 11. Dr. Schrock headed the committees for the 1958 Festival, which is

reviving the folk crafts and the folklore of this Pennsylvania German community. The October 2 issue of the Meyersdale paper carried a guest editorial by Alta Schrock on "The Spirit of the Community." M.G.

## 1835 MEETING

(Continued from Page 2)

ich Komme dan allererst die steuer zu samlen sey mit diesen und dergleichen schritstellen ist es Deutlich zu sehen dass die ersten Christen die steuer samlung Vor eine Vestgesetzte Regel und ordnung gehalten haben und Christus hat dord eine sehr Tröstliche erinerung und aufmunterung gemacht Vor die armen Wie Wir lesen Marcus im 12 Cap Wo es heisst und Jesus setzte sich gegen dem Gottes Kasten und schauete Wie das Volk gelt einlegte in den Gottes Kasten und Viele reiche legten Viel ein und es Kam eine arme Witwe und legte zwey scherflein ein die machen einen Heller und er rief seine jünger zu sich und sprach zu ihnen Wahrlich ich sage euch Diese arme Witwe hat mehr in den Gottes Kasten gelegt dan alle die eingelegt haben dan sie haben alle Von ihrem übrigen eingelegt diese aber hat Von ihrer armuth alles Was sie hat ihre gantze nahrung eingelegt hier sehen Wir dass den armen ihr geringes schärflein Vor Gott in gröserem Werth und ansehen ist als Wan die reichen nur Von ihrem überfluss einlegen doch so es aus liebe und aus freiwillem Herten geschihet so ist es Gott angenehm dan der apostel Paulus sagt einen Frölichen geber hat Gott lieb so Wollen Wir noch so sagen mit dem apostel Pauli alles Was ihr Thut das Thut Von Herten als dem Herrn und nicht den menschen und Wisset dass ihr Von dem Herrn empfangen Werdet die Vergeltung

## English Translation

Rockingham County, Virginia, April 10, 1835, was our preachers' assembly, where the following officials (Diener) met together, namely, Abraham Niswander (Neuschwander), Peter Burkholder (Burckholter), Daniel Good (Guth), Frederick Rhodes (Friederich Roth), Benjamin Wenger, and Martin Kendig (Marty Kindig) of Augusta County, and David Heatwole (Hütwohl), elder (deacon). The aged brethren, Henry Shenk (Schenck) and Michael Stauffer and John Fauber (Faber) of Augusta County, were not able to be present on account of infirmity and sickness. Brother Daniel Shewalter (Schohwalter), because of the illness of his wife, was unable to be present. Brother Anthony Rhodes (Roth), elder (deacon), was also not with us.

We the (above-)named who were gathered with each other . . . (leaf missing) of the poor and needy members or where something else that pertains to the congregation (church) is to be paid, then it shall each time be done with the counsel of the congregation (church). It is now to be hoped that the congregation (church) will be in accord with this our proposal, for it is nothing new or unscriptural, for we can find many traces and indications that it was from of old a Christian regulation and custom to gather contributions and to distribute where there was need. Christ once said, "You have the poor with you always and whenever you will, you may do them good." We read in the Acts of the Apostles, in the 11th chapter, that each one among the disciples decided according to his ability to send assistance to the brethren who lived in Judea, as they then also did and sent it to the elders through the hand of Barnabas and Saul. (In) First Corinthians 16 we read how Paul advised the Corinthians how they should do and says, "Concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia even so do you. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as seems good to him, so that it be not necessary, when I come, first to gather the contributions."

With these and such Scripture passages it is clear to see that the early Christians considered the gathering of offerings a fixed rule and regulation. And Christ made a very comforting reminder and encouragement for the poor, as we read in chapter 12 of Mark, where it is written, "And Jesus sat down opposite the treasury (Gotteskasten) and observed how the people put money into the treasury: and many rich people put in much. And there came a poor widow and put in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called to him his disciples, and said to them, Verily I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury, than all that have contributed: for they have all given of their abundance; but she of her want gave all that she had—her entire livelihood." Here we see that the meager mite of the poor is of greater worth and recognition before God than when the rich give only of their surplus. If it is done out of love and out of a voluntary heart, then it is pleasing to God, for the Apostle Paul says God loves a cheerful giver. So we want further to say with the Apostle Paul, "All that you do, do it heartily as to the Lord, and not to men: and know that from the Lord you will receive the reward."



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VOL. XX

APRIL, 1959

No. 2

## Lancaster Mennonite Conference Historical Society Begins Its Work

IRA D. LANDIS

[The following article is reprinted, along with a few corrections made by the author, from the *Pastoral Messenger*, January, 1959. Ed.]

Almost two hundred and fifty years after Mennonites began settling in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, they were still without a historical society. Eventually, in 1956, a Library Study Committee was appointed to study in the conference the place of the Christian E. Charles Theological Library, a historical library, and the archives for historical tidbits. Out of this study, so far, has come the Lancaster Mennonite Conference Historical Society, appointed by the Bishop Board in the spring of 1958. The first meeting was called by the Chairman, J. Paul Graybill, on May 22 at Salunga, Pennsylvania, when it organized with the undersigned as Secretary, and Norman W. Nauman as Treasurer. The committee of eight also includes: Earl B. Groff, J. Lloyd Gingerich, Otto J. Miller, Daniel D. Wert, and Chester C. Graybill. The minutes of this fiscal year will have recorded a dozen official meetings, most of which were four hours long.

The Historical Library when completed will include all of our church publications from the start: *The Herald of Truth* (1864-1908), *Gospel Witness* (1905-1908), *Gospel Herald* (1908- ), *Christian Monitor* (1909-1953), *Words of Cheer* (1876- ), *Youth's Christian Companion* (1920- ), *Beams of Light*, now *Story Friends* (1905- ), *Family Almanac* (1870-1955), *Mennonite Yearbook and Directory* (1905- ), Sunday-school literature (1890- ) in German and English (and this will soon be voluminous, *The Christian Ministry* (1948- ), *The Christian School* (1949- ), etc., etc. We are expecting to include all Amish and Mennonite books in print, histories and literature of all other related denominations in this area, all histories of all counties where our people are found in southeastern and central Pennsylvania, as well as all daughter colonies in Ontario,



Dirk Philips (1504-1568). This portrait engraving by an unknown artist was made in the early part of the 17th century. Concerning its authenticity as a true portrait of Dirk, see the *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen*, Deel XIV (1889), pp. 41-42.

down the Shenandoah Valley, Washington County, Maryland, and Franklin County, Pennsylvania, Conference, Allegheny Conference; Sterling and Freeport, Illinois; Roseland Nebraska; etc. We now lack four of the Colonial Records and Pennsylvania Archives, about one hundred and thirty-six volumes in toto. We need all bulletins of the Lancaster Historical Society, (lacking Vols. I, IV, and seven issues in VI-VIII), Kittatinny, Lebanon, and historical societies in the area of our three eastern conferences. We need all genealogies in the area, especially of an Amish and Mennonite flavor; for genealogy is the invaluable neglected stepister of church history. We will appreciate old deeds of meetinghouses and historic affinities, *Fractur*, folklore, photos of ordained Mennonite leaders and other early leaders. In fact, anything throwing

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## A History of the Conservative Mennonite Churches in Northern Indiana

ORA TROYER

[This is the first thorough history of the Conservative Mennonite Church in Elkhart and Lagrange Counties, Indiana. John C. Wenger]

The beginning of the Conservative Mennonite Church in the northern Indiana area stems from several earlier withdrawals from the Old Order Amish Church that formed congregations known as the "Amish Mennonites" or "Churchhouse Amish." The congregations formed were the Forks Church and the Clinton Frame Church in 1857. In 1876 a group, mainly from the Forks Church, formed the congregation at Townline, which was the mother church of the Conservative churches in the northern Indiana area.

The Clinton Frame (1854) and Forks (1857) Congregations were started largely because of the influence of a group in Holmes County, Ohio, which withdrew from the Old Order Amish Church in 1848. Numerous differences of opinion caused the separation in Ohio, but especially prominent was the issue on the manner in which baptism should be administered. Those who withdrew from the Amish Church held that baptism should be administered in a body of water or stream (not immersion, however). The influence of this idea spread to the Indiana community thus resulting in the founding of Forks and Clinton Frame, as well as Maple Grove, Howard-Miami, and other churches.

It appears that the reasons for the formation of the Townline Congregation in 1876 did not include any major differences of opinion, but consisted of differing attitudes among the leaders at Forks with regard to rules and regulations. At least the mode of baptism was the same at Townline as had been practiced at Forks. This method was in practice at Townline until 1915 when baptismal services were performed in the church house. Actually, it appears that the "stream-

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CONFERENCE HISTORICAL

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light on the faith and practice of our Mennonite forefathers is vital in steering through the crises ahead. Then, too, we need all church bulletins issued by the congregations of this conference, the records of all conference committees and institutions, especially when changing secretaries.

This is a massive task, especially at this late date when, due to new, cramped quarters, the average home relegates much to the flames and the ragman. About forty years ago Brother H. S. Bender traveled throughout our conference collecting materials. He was too late for committeeman John Shenk's materials, the Christian Herr-Amos Herr Library, etc., but some material was rescued from oblivion, and along with access to it, we have a happy relationship with Goshen College and the Mennonite Archives in building up this library. The Bishop Jacob Hostetter correspondence of 1820-1865 has turned up in the Mennonite Archives. Your society has helped to get these sixty-four letters translated for both of us. These and other happy finds now and then appear. What more is there for you to produce, to help us to reconstruct much better our own history, over many "silent gaps"?

If you go through your garret and find anything in Mennonitica, don't burn it. (If you don't want it, give us the privilege to make a bonfire.) We do not need copies of *Christian Monitor* except 1909-1917, nor *Herald of Truth* except a few issues in 1906 and 1907. We need no issues of *Missionary Messenger*, *Gospel Witness*, *Gospel Herald*, *Mennonite Community*, *Christian Living*, or *Mennonite Life*; but we need almost all of *The Way*, some few quarterlies, *Program Builder*, *Beams of Light*, *Youth's Christian Companion*, etc. Of the *Beams of Light*, we need especially some issues of 1912 and thereabouts, otherwise but scattered ones. Large family Bibles are not wanted unless of an early leader, but all family records, and other records taken from them, the *Martyrs' Mirrors*, etc., would be very welcome. Any help on complete records of cemeteries in the conference area would be also very welcome; but don't work on large ones without seeing what we already possess in our more than two hundred and fifty partial records. We need Ephrata and Baer prints, the three Sauer Bibles, and the following genealogies: Zartman, Heisey, Strickler, Eby (5 volumes), Nash, Hege, and Bechtel. Also desired are histories of Franklin County, some Waylands, more

Amish, and hosts of others too numerous to mention.

The Mission Board provided temporary accommodations in the new Mission Board Headquarters building, giving us a home for the starter; but very soon we will need new quarters, probably an addition to the Christian E. Charles Library building nearby, or at a new Conference centre, so much needed.

We are typing a card file for all obituaries in the files of *Herald of Truth*, *Gospel Witness* and *Gospel Herald*. This work is completed to 1918 now, and includes obituaries of people who had lived within the confines of the three eastern conferences. All such as were born here, as well as church leaders in other areas, are in a separate file. Important articles—articles by, and news items on/or of interest to these eastern conferences are also in a separate file. We have the indices ready to bring down to date. Then we will start files on other publications, books, and cemetery records, as a ready reference for researchers and anyone desiring historical and genealogical data on this area. We are collecting complete files on papers from many fields and binding them as soon as complete, and are aware of many books of interest to our library.

The Society is making a definite drive in six congregations for historical books, manuscripts, clippings, records, pictures, etc. The present drive is being made in Hernley, Bowmansville, Weaverland, Mellinger, Slate Hill, and Dohner's congregations. Then the rest will eventually follow. If you don't know what will become of any such historical items when you are gone, give them to us now and you can know. Donations and bequests by will, of any size, are needed and welcome. You will be hearing more of this new child of the conference, interested in old things (Cf. Deuteronomy 32:7).

## NORTHERN INDIANA CHURCHES

(Continued from Page 1)

method" was never strictly a rule in any of these churches, preference being given to the candidate desiring baptism as to whether it should be in a stream or in the church house.

Counsel meeting was held and the Townline Church was organized March 25, 1876. John P. King and Christ Yoder came from Logan County, Ohio, to conduct the counsel meeting and help organize the congregation. The newly-formed group met in houses for worship for about a year until a church building was erected in 1877, about 15 miles east of Goshen in LaGrange County.

The size of the Townline Congre-

gation numbered about 75 members when it was formed in 1876. One of these was Joseph Bontrager who had been ordained as a minister in the Forks Church in 1867. Joseph moved to Kansas in 1883. John M. Hostetler was ordained minister October 19, 1876.

Joseph Yoder, a bishop in the Barker Street Church near Vistula, Indiana, worked with Townline from its beginning and he had bishop oversight until about 1883 when he moved to Illinois. The Barker Street Church apparently was quite like the Townline Church in practice while Joseph Yoder had charge. However, after Joseph moved away the Barker Street Church fellowshiped to a greater extent with Clinton Frame and Forks than with Townline.

A church was also organized at Pretty Prairie near Howe, Indiana, at about the same time that Townline was begun. People moved to the Pretty Prairie vicinity from Logan County, Ohio, and at one time a sizable congregation existed there. However, by about 1905 most of the members had moved away and the church was completely broken up. During the time that the Pretty Prairie Congregation existed Townline worked with that congregation to some extent.

Bishop oversight at Townline after 1883 was assumed by Peter Stuckey of Fulton County, Ohio. Eli Yoder of Allen County, Indiana, also assisted in that capacity, and John Luginbill assisted as visiting minister. Jonathan ("Joni") J. Troyer, a member at Townline was ordained as deacon in October 14, 1883, as minister in 1886, and as bishop in 1895. He served as bishop until his death in 1930. Sam T. Eash was ordained bishop in 1927 and assisted Jonathan until he died, and then Sam had full bishop oversight. More will be given later on the ministerial ordinations in their chronological sequence.

The congregation at Townline did not increase with any great rapidity. As stated previously, the initial membership numbered about 75. By 1890 the size had increased to about 125. However in 1900 the membership had decreased to 70, and by 1914 to 40.

Naturally such dwindling in number is not without a cause. From 1904 to 1907 a large segment of the congregation moved to Shelbyville, Illinois. The reason for moving seems to have been due largely to the influence of a certain man known as the "sleeping preacher," who was also a member at Townline. This preacher would go into a sort of semiconscious condition, and while in that state would preach

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# News and Notes

**TWENTY YEARS.** More than one reader will have noticed that 1959 has been marking the twentieth year of the *Bulletin's* life. The *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* was introduced to the Mennonite Church in 1940 by John C. Wenger, its first editor, as the organ of the Historical Committee. It first appeared as a 4-page, semiannual publication, but already by 1942 it came out quarterly, and in 1952 two issues each year were expanded to eight pages. Among other periodicals the *Bulletin* has always been recognizable by its size of 11 by 8 inches, its off-brown paper stock, and its fairly regular layout of three columns of text with a single illustration on the front page.

"It will be the aim of this *Bulletin*," the editor wrote in April 1940, "to keep its readers informed of current progress in Mennonite historical study; to provide a channel for brief articles dealing with the history of our denomination." He then goes on to say that place will be made for book reviews and news of historical interest. A quick glance at the various volumes of the *Bulletin* shows that local American Mennonite history has filled most of the columns, although there have been articles of European subject matter. There are many book reviews and news has been fairly full. The Question Box has been discontinued. A useful guide to the materials of the first ten volumes is the Cumulative Author and Subject Index prepared in 1949 by Nelson P. Springer. Some thought has been given to a cumulative index at the end of the twentieth volume, and it is hoped that a way will be found to compile it.

**ABOUT THE AMISH.** Among the more important recent publications about the Amish are an article by Elmer Lewis Smith, "Personality Differences between Amish and Non-Amish Children," in *Rural Sociology*, vol. 23, no. 4 (December, 1958); and a brochure by Vincent R. Tortora, *The Amish Folk of Pennsylvania Dutch Country*. The latter is profusely illustrated with photographs and pen drawings which, along with the format and cover design, give it the appearance of a popular pamphlet. It is nevertheless a carefully prepared and sympathetic treatment. It may be ordered from the Photo Arts Press, P. O. Box 1274, Lancaster, Pa.

Herald Press has reissued John A. Hostetler's two booklets *Amish Life* and *Mennonite Life* in completely revised and rewritten editions. The former art work has been replaced

with illustrations by Beulah Hostetler and all photographs are new ones. The new cover photographs are reproduced in four color process but the price remains the same, fifty cents each.

**THE WANDERING SOUL.** A new English edition of *The Wandering Soul* by J. P. Schabaelje, which first appeared in Dutch in 1647 and subsequently in many editions in Dutch, German and English was published in 1958 by Menno Sauder of Elmira, Ontario, Canada. This new book is an offset edition of the Baer edition printed at Lancaster in 1874, except for a few alterations in the footnotes, some appended materials, and a few pages which were reset. This Mennonite devotional book may be ordered from the publisher or from the printer, Light & Hope, Berne, Indiana. As a companion volume the publisher also brought out in 1958 a reprint of several portions of Dirk Philips, *Enchiridion or Hand Book*.

**JOHN HORSCH CONTEST.** The winners in Class III of the John Horsch Mennonite History Essay Contest for 1957-58 were announced in the previous issue of the *Bulletin*. The judges of Class II, college freshmen, sophomores, and juniors, have now announced their decision to give the awards to three students from Eastern Mennonite College. James O. Lehman won first prize with an essay entitled, "Sonnenberg: The Pioneer Church"; John R. Glick, second, "Our Changing Mutual Aid Program," and James Good, third, "George R. Brunk."

**THESIS ON SEBASTIAN FRANCK.** The Dutch Mennonite minister at Leiden, Simon L. Verheus, obtained the Ph.D. degree in November 1958 at the University of Amsterdam. His

doctoral dissertation was a theological study which compared the views of history in Sebastian Franck and the Madgeburg Centuries. It was titled, *Kroniek en Kerugma, Een theologische studie over de Maagdenburger Centurien*. Copies may be ordered from the publisher, Van Loghum Slaterus, Arnhem, The Netherlands.

No Baptist (Täufer) will be found in war, and few in prison or on the gallows because of their crimes. The majority of them are inclined to peacefulness. It is still possible to sleep unconcernedly among them and not need to fear robbery or even murder if one has much money. It would indeed be desirable that the whole world were full of these "deteriorated" Baptists (Täufer). Their outcome has turned out far better than that of many from among the Pietists who have again taken an evil turn.—Alexander Mack (1713), D. F. Durnbaugh, *European Origins of the Brethren*, p. 343.

\* \* \*

As far as is known to us, no member of the Brethren group was martyred for his faith. This is not to say that the Brethren did not experience suffering for their beliefs. Two episodes stand out in this respect—the sentencing of Christian Liebe to serve as a galley slave, and the imprisonment of the Solingen Brethren. In each case, there exists a surprisingly well-documented story of the imprisonment and the release. The efforts of the Dutch Mennonites, the Swiss Pietists, and others present nearly classic examples of assistance to those repressed for religious reasons.—D. F. Durnbaugh, *European Origins of the Brethren*, p. 217.

## OUR HISTORY

More than four centuries ago Conrad Grebel and fifteen others stepped out in full loyalty to the teachings of Christ and established a free church of voluntary believers. The members of the new church received baptism after conversion and lived in strict obedience to the New Testament ethic, including the nonresistant manner of life. Persecution set in at once and took a serious toll of life. The history of the Mennonite Church is written in blood and tears.

One of the few early leaders who escaped the executioner was Menno Simons. Menno will always be remembered for his unflinching stand for the truth of God's word and for his humble devotion to the cause of Christ's kingdom.

Our Church has many heroes of the faith, and many of them gave their lives that the precious heritage might be preserved. The only way to become acquainted with the story of the past is to read history. It is to stimulate interest in the history of the Mennonite Church that this *Bulletin* has been founded.

John C. Wenger, in the first issue of the *Mennonite Historical Bulletin*, April, 1940.



## NORTHERN INDIANA CHURCHES

(Continued from Page 2)

with considerable force and fervor. Apparently the group who favored the "sleeping preacher" wanted to have him preach regularly at Townline. Being unable to accomplish this a contingent moved to Illinois and formed a congregation there.

By 1922 the congregation had again increased to 100 members, and by 1927 to 150. Attendance at Townline has tended to fluctuate considerably. When Griner became more independent as a congregation naturally Townline attendance decreased. Again when Pleasant Grove was built Townline and Griner both had a decrease in membership. This, of course, was the desired effect, especially for Griner, since it was overcrowded. In September, 1957 the approximate membership at Townline was 95; at Griner 240; at Pleasant Grove 250; at Riverview 175; at Bethel 90.

Due to the crowded conditions at Townline, and in order to have a meetinghouse more closely in the area where many of the members lived, the Griner church building near Middlebury, Indiana, was purchased for a thousand dollars in 1921 from a Lutheran group.

In 1922 regular services were held at Griner every other Sunday. On alternate Sundays services were conducted at Townline. Evening services were conducted at the place where no day service had been held. Prior to the purchase of the Griner building, Townline had had regular services only biweekly up to 1917. From 1917 on services were held at Townline every Lord's Day, and evening services were also begun. However, during the first few years evening services were discontinued during the winter months.

Beginning July 14, 1935, services were held both at Townline and Griner every Sunday. The membership had increased to an amount appreciable enough to warrant this. However, the evening services were still held only on alternate Sundays at each meeting place.

The Townline building today is the one originally built but it has been remodeled several times since its erection. In 1927 a basement was dug just a little west of the original building and the building was moved onto it. At the same time an addition of sixteen feet was built on the south end of the building. In 1956 a new front was added and modern toilet facilities were added. A public address system was also installed about that time.

After its purchase the Griner building was also remodeled and enlarged to accommodate the increased membership. In recent years mod-

ern toilet facilities and a public address system have also been installed there.

In 1947-48 a church building was erected north of Millersburg, Indiana. Those living within a certain radius of this churchhouse, who had been attending either Townline or Griner made Pleasant Grove, as it was called, their meeting place. Sam T. Eash had continued bishop oversight both at Townline and Griner and also at Pleasant Grove until Clarence A. Yoder was ordained to that office in 1950 to serve the Pleasant Grove Congregation.

In the spring of 1952 a basement church building (the ground level story was completed in 1954) was erected near White Pigeon, Michigan, at which numerous members from Griner, and also some from Townline and Pleasant Grove, congregated for worship. Several factors were involved in the building of this Riverview congregation. One was the crowded condition at Griner; another was the fact that a number of families had purchased farms across the Michigan line, and thus had quite a distance to church. Other factors not so easily defined, undoubtedly, also had some part in the formation of the congregation.

The Riverview Congregation was not begun under the bishop oversight of Sam T. Eash as Griner and Pleasant Grove had been. The executive committee of the Conservative Conference, of which the Indiana Conservative Churches were also members, appointed Emanuel Peachey to serve as bishop in charge of Riverview. This congregation began almost at the outstart to maintain a more liberal attitude toward rules and regulations, and practices in the worship service, than had prevailed at the other congregations. Many of the members purchased radios, an item which had been prohibited in the other congregations. The sisters' worship veils took on more of the pattern of those in vogue in the Mennonite churches. Herald Press Sunday school quarterlies began to be used in the adult classes in Sunday school, whereas direct Bible study was in use by the other congregations. In short, the congregational discipline and church practices were more patterned after the Mennonite churches in the community than the Conservative churches from which they had come. However, there were and still are considerable differences between this congregation and other Mennonite congregations in the community. Riverview Congregation is, of course, a member of the Conservative Mennonite Conference.

Noah Zehr and Jonas Miller, who were both ministers at Griner, now serve at Riverview. Noah began

preaching at Riverview right after it was formed and Jonas started preaching there about two years after that. Willard Mayer of Pigeon, Michigan, was ordained to the ministry and served a very short time at Riverview soon after it was started. In September of 1954, Ora Kauffman, a minister of Vassar, Michigan, moved near White Pigeon and served in the ministry at Riverview. He was ordained to the office of bishop in October, 1955.

By the spring of 1954 attendance at Pleasant Grove already was large enough to cause an overcrowded condition and it was decided to build a church house close to Nappanee from which area a number of families (primarily members who had transferred from the Old Order Amish) had been coming to Pleasant Grove for services. The new meeting place, called Bethel, was opened for services on February 6, 1955, with J. C. Wenger giving the message. Bishop oversight there has been in charge of Clarence Yoder.

The membership at Bethel was comprised mainly of those who had been attending at Pleasant Grove and lived in the Nappanee area. Homer Miller of Nappanee, who had been ordained in the Amish church, transferred his membership to Pleasant Grove in August 1954 and then served as a minister at Bethel when it was started. Jake Miller was also ordained as minister for the Bethel congregation on June 19, 1955.

A complete listing of the ministerial ordinations may be seen from the table at the end of this paper.

Church worship services are now held regularly on Sunday mornings at each of these meeting houses. As stated previously, up to 1917 services were conducted only biweekly at Townline. After Griner was purchased, Sunday morning services were held alternately at Griner and Townline. Many families attended regularly every Sunday—one Sunday at Townline, the next at Griner—but others attended only when services were at the churchhouse nearest their home. From 1935 on, Sunday morning services were conducted both at Townline and Griner, as well as at Pleasant Grove (1948), Riverview (1952), and Bethel (1955) as they were formed.

When Pleasant Grove, the third meetinghouse was built, the ministers of Griner and Townline rotated regularly to preach among the three congregations. Sam Eash had bishop oversight of all three congregations as well. However, after 1948 each minister was assigned to a specific congregation where he then served regularly.

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## Mennonite Research News and Notes

MELVIN GINGERICH

The *Canadian Historical Review* in its October 1958 issue reported the following doctoral dissertations in progress: Paul E. Crunican, "The Manitoba School Question and Canadian Federal Politics," (Toronto); Stanley N. Murray, "Agricultural History of Red River Valley of the North," (Wisconsin); L. G. Reeds, "The Agricultural Geography of Southern Ontario," (Toronto); John A. Toews, "Alternative Service in Canada During World War II," (Manitoba); John Warkentin, "The Mennonite Settlements in Manitoba: A Study in Historical Geography," (Toronto).

In addition it reported the following four master's theses as being in progress: Marilyn Glynn Huck, "Early Settlement in Waterloo County (Upper Canada)," (Toronto); Charles Humphries, "Upper Canada in 1813," (Toronto); V. J. Peters, "All Things Common: The Hutterians of Manitoba" (Manitoba); Henry G. Walton, "Patterns of Occupational and Social Adjustment Among German-speaking Immigrant Professionals in Canada," (Toronto).

The October-December 1957 *Journal of American Folklore* contained an article by Bruno Nettl on "The Hymns of the Amish: An Example of Marginal Survival."

Eldon Kortemeir in 1958 wrote a 94-page typed article on "The Life and Growth of the Freeport Mennonite Church." The article was revised and duplicated in 1959. Inquiries can be addressed to Richard J. Yordy, Route 4, Freeport, Illinois.

Russell Bixler of Bethany Biblical Seminary, Chicago, is doing a study on footwashing.

Claus-Peter Clasen is writing a dissertation on "The Social Structure of the German Baptists in the 16th Century" at the Free University of Berlin.

Gordon Dyck of the Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana, is writing the "History of the First Mennonite Church of Nappanee, Indiana."

Orville D. Schmidt is writing a paper in the History Department of the University of Chicago on "The Opposition of the Doctrine of Polygamy as Instituted by Johann von Leyden in Münster, 1534."

Elwyn L. Simons of the Department of Geology at Princeton University is doing research in the history of the Hershey family.

Jesse Yoder, Birdsboro, Pa., is doing a doctoral dissertation in the Northwestern University School of Speech on "A Rhetorical Analysis of the Frankenthal Anabaptist Debates." Yoder spent the school year

1956-57 at Heidelberg University doing background work for his dissertation.

A booklet entitled, *Fiftieth Anniversary West Clinton Mennonite Church*, was issued in 1958 by the West Clinton Mennonite Church, Pettisville, Ohio. This 32-page booklet contains illustrations, a table of events, lists of ministers, plus general histories of the West Clinton and Lockport congregations.

The Richfield Mennonite Church, Richfield, Pennsylvania, in 1958 issued a 46-page booklet on its 75th anniversary. Various tables, pictures, and lists of events as well as treatments of every aspect of church activities combine to make this a valuable historical account.

Among the holdings in the rich music collection of the Washington Cathedral Library is a copy of *Christliches Gesangbuch, zunächst für den Gebrauch der evangelischen Mennoniten-Gemeinen in der Pfalz. Worms, 1832*. The Goshen College Historical Library also has a copy of this hymnal.

R. C. Laurie Mitton completed a master's thesis at the University of Arkansas in 1955 on "A Study of the Relationship of Pietism to Didacticism in Mennonite Poetry and the Influence of Pietism upon Mennonite Poetic Didacticism."

The Dartmouth College Department of Religion has prepared a mimeographed collection of primary source readings for sale to its students taking the introductory course "The Judeo-Christian Tradition." In it is reproduced in its entirety "The Schleithem Confession" as published in the October 1945 *Mennonite Quarterly Review*.

Donald Blosser, Columbiana, Ohio, is doing his Goshen College social science seminar on the story of the Mennonite "Sea-going Cowboys" during the days of UNRRA. Almost 1,000 Mennonites served in this program.

John P. Duersken, Hesston College, has done extensive research in Europe on "Mennonite Music Worship Practices." He has been particularly interested in "the reasons for the Mennonite tradition and position on the use of musical instruments in worship services."

Recent accessions of the Archives of the Mennonite Church include:

1. Two S. D. Guengerich diaries, from Menno S. Guengerich.
2. Tape recording of a sermon by A. C. Good and historical addresses by Harry Weber and Noah Byers delivered in the Science Ridge Mennonite Church,

Sterling, Illinois, presented by Raymond Book.

3. A box of Pueblo, Colorado, Mennonite Church records, from Mary McCrory.

The June 1958 *Missionary Challenge*, 4001 West 56th, Des Moines, 10, Iowa, contains a short historical sketch on the Thurman, Colorado, Mennonite Church, by Aaron Unterhahr of Flagler, Colorado.

The Board of Education and Publication of the General Conference Mennonite Church recently did a thorough "College Plans Survey for 1958-1976." Their findings published in a preliminary report show three times as many of their young people entering college by 1973 as enrolled in 1958. Maynard Shelly, Newton, Kansas, gave out the *Preliminary Report* in February 1959.

### SUSTAINING MEMBERS OF THE MENNONITE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

The list of sustaining members of the Mennonite Historical Association for 1958, as reported by the treasurer, is as follows:

Ira J. Buckwalter  
Paul Erb  
J. Roy Graybill  
Melvin Gingerich  
Maris W. Hess  
Ira D. Landis  
Orie O. Miller  
Nelson P. Springer  
John C. Wenger

### THE EARLY INTIMACY OF FRIENDS AND MENNONITES

A Netherlander Mennonite, dwelling at London, who wrote, August 6th, 1709 to Amsterdam and Haarlem says: 'Eight families went to Pennsylvania; the English Friends called Quakers, helped them liberally.' Barclay, in his *Religious Societies of the Commonwealth*, says, 'But not only did the leaders of the early Society of Friends take great interest in the Mennonites, but the yearly meeting of 1709 contributed fifty pounds (a very large sum at that time) for the Mennonites of the Palatinate, who fled from the persecution of the Calvinists in Switzerland.' This required the agreement of the representatives of above four hundred churches, and shows, in a strong light, the sympathy which existed among the early Friends for the Mennonites." May this brotherly love remain and grow brighter.—Selected by S. Godschalk. (*Herald of Truth*, March 1, 1884, p. 71).



## NORTHERN INDIANA CHURCHES

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There is good evidence that Sunday school was a regular part of the service as early as 1890. Direct Bible study without the use of discussion helps such as quarterlies, has been the practice for the adult classes in the Sunday school. This is still true today except at Riverview. However, since 1944 the children's classes up to twelve years old have been using the Herald Press materials.

Preaching on Sunday morning was almost entirely in German until 1947. Occasionally a visiting minister would preach in English and would seem to gain a more attentive audience, particularly among the young people. The home ministers, too, began to read in English, and as younger ministers were ordained, the services began to be more and more in English. Today, the preaching is entirely in English and only occasionally are any remarks across the pulpit made in German. However, most of the people in attendance can speak fluently the Pennsylvania German ("Dutch"), and much of the conversation after the service is in that dialect.

The singing in the service was done from German hymnals for many years, but the writer recalls the pleasure he anticipated when a hymn was announced from the English section of *Eine Sammlung von schönen Lieder*, which was then in use. In 1941 the congregations voted to use the *Church Hymnal* and it has been the hymnal in use in the worship service since that time. Singing in the worship service is led by anyone who cares to lead a hymn. It is led from whatever place the person may be sitting. There is no regular chorister who leads in front of the congregation except at special services such as weddings. Special singing groups such as quartets are not permitted in the worship service. Only for funerals is a small group selected to provide the singing. However, small singing groups have been formed from time to time. These have met to sing mostly for their own enjoyment and inspiration, but they have also taken part in services outside of their own congregations, especially at mission stations. A couple of years ago, a young people's chorus was started and has continued ever since. There is a monthly Sunday evening hymnsing in charge of the young people which is well attended by the young people and also older ones who enjoy singing.

Midweek services have been conducted since about 1946. These have been largely in charge of the young

people of the congregations, but older ones also attend and often an older person is elected to lead the Bible discussion group. For the young people of the Townline, Griner, and Pleasant Grove churches the midweek service is a cooperative affair and is rotated among the three churches. Thus the meeting is at one place every third week. However, those who attend the meeting usually attend each week irrespective of which church house it is held.

Townline also has an adult prayer fellowship, and Bethel and Riverview each maintain separate midweek services.

The sisters in the churches maintain regular monthly sewing circles. Bethel and Pleasant Grove cooperate together and the other congregations each maintain theirs separately. The sewing circles are quite well supported, serving as a social contact as well as a service project for the sisters. A sewing circle was first begun, probably in the mid-twenties, when sewing was done for the conference-sponsored Children's Home.

Since 1953 a Junior Sewing Circle was begun among the younger sisters.

The young people of Townline, Griner, and Pleasant Grove have tended to stay together as a social group despite their membership at the separate congregations. This has shown itself in the common midweek services, as mentioned, and in literaries, in *The Way* distribution, and the like. The Bethel young people also participate in some of these activities, but the Riverview young people have tended to maintain their own activities separately. The close proximity of the Townline, Griner, and Pleasant Grove churches is probably the chief factor causing this. Bethel and Riverview are farther from the hub of the homes of most of the young people.

Revival meetings are usually an annual feature in each congregation. These are generally eagerly anticipated and well attended. From the time that Townline became a part of the Conservative Conference it is apparent that these services were considered an essential part of the church program. Conference at first appointed a certain minister to be responsible to conduct revival meetings in specified districts during a given season; now each congregation decides all this for itself.

Summer Bible schools have been a part of the program of the churches since about 1948. Prior to this the children usually attended the Mennonite Bible schools in the community during the summer. Recognizing the need for Summer Bible schools, and their own responsibility in this area, the churches then be-

gan to conduct their own Bible schools. The Herald Press materials are used. Each congregation independently organizes its own Bible school each summer.

Bible conferences or special youth programs as such have not been much in vogue in the congregations, though there have been a few in recent years. During the annual revival meetings at least one meeting is devoted mainly to the youth. In recent years winter Bible school is usually held in at least one of the churches during the winter. On special church days such as Good Friday or Ascension Day some type of worship service is held.

Organized mission work has been sponsored by the churches only in the last several years. However, individuals from the various congregations have rendered various periods of service at missions or welfare agencies sponsored by the Conservative or Mennonite Conferences. The churches have been helping financially and otherwise in the conference mission and relief program probably since its inception.

About 1948 several young men went to Minnesota to help teach Bible school in districts where Irvin Shantz had charge. As interest grew in this particular area and an opportunity was given in 1950 to assume charge of a mission post at Kitchi, Minnesota, the three churches, Townline, Griner, and Pleasant Grove, agreed to sponsor the workers for that place. Leroy Yoders and Joni Beachys moved to the area and Leroy was ordained to serve as minister there on October 16, 1952.

Other Summer Bible school work has been carried on in a limited way in areas where a need was felt to be present, but presently there is no Sunday school work being done outside of the established churches, except at Kitchi, at least to the writer's knowledge. There seems to be a feeling among many of the constituency that a work of this kind should be begun.

Basically, a conservative viewpoint has characterized the thinking and practices in the congregations during the years. This is especially noticeable when a comparison is made between the congregations in this area as compared with those in other areas of the Conference. Considerable effort has been made to maintain a status of separation from the world in dress. A regulation coat is worn by most of the men and a cape dress by all the sisters, and the worship veil is worn by most of the sisters on the street as well as in the worship service.

The radio, and of course television, are still banned to the members but this rule (concerning the radio) has

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## A History of the Old Order Amish Mennonite Sunday School at East Center Congregation, Hutchinson, Kansas

VAL. J. HEADINGS, JR.

[This history of an Old Order Amish Mennonite Sunday school in Kansas was typed from an 8-page pamphlet without date or place of publication. It was written likely about 1947. We have reprinted it here because it is a significant historical record which will interest a wider audience of readers. Ed.]

The first Old Order Amish Mennonites to settle on the Kansas prairie were the Bishop C. E. Bontrager and Abraham Nisly families who migrated to Kansas from Shelby County, Illinois, and located about nine miles southwest of Hutchinson. They arrived in July 1883, and at that time there was an abundant growth of prairie grass from two to four feet in height. There were only a few houses or buildings between Hutchinson and Partridge at that time and those were rudely built. The road at that time was only a wagon trail through the prairie and to this time there can still be seen the tracks cut by the wagons through the prairie where the native sod is still unbroken.

In the year 1884 the Noah Miller family from Holmes County, Ohio, heeded the call of the Western Prairie and settled about seven miles southwest of Hutchinson. In March 1886 the John Headings family from Lawrence County, Pennsylvania, came and settled about five miles southwest of Hutchinson. Soon after, in the same year, the Dan E. Mast and the J. R. Yutzy families also came to Kansas and settled about six miles southwest of Hutchinson.

### SUNDAY SCHOOL ORGANIZED

Church was held in the houses of members every other Sunday. After Dan E. Mast arrived he sensed the need of more Bible study and teaching and he organized the first Sunday school of the Old Order Amish Mennonite Church in Kansas. The first Sunday school was held in a vacant house on the west eighty of the Dan A. Nisly quarter now owned by Edward D. Nisly, Dan D. Nisly being a son of the Pioneer Abraham Nisly. Sunday school was held on the Sundays between church services.

The first death in the new settlement in Kansas was that of the Pioneer Abraham Nisly in 1885. He was buried in the cemetery still used

by the Amish churches located one mile north and one and one-half miles east of Partridge. The second death was the wife of Bishop C. E. Bontrager who died in 1886.

The first marriage in the new settlement was that of Noah B. Yoder and Barbara Bontrager. The house they were married in is part of the present home of their son, John B. Yoder, and family.

In the year 1888 the Noah Helmut family from Holmes County (Ohio) and others settled in the community. As more people moved in the Sunday school was opposed by some and was discontinued part of the time.

In the summer of 1888 interest was again revived and Sunday school was started in the houses of the members on the Sundays between church services and lasted all day, having recess and noon. Dan E. Mast was again leading and encouraging.

### WORK DONE IN SUNDAY SCHOOL

Some things memorized by the pupils at Sunday School were the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, and Books of the Bible. Pete Miller was chosen as superintendent in 1888. Sunday school was held in 1888 and 1889. Interest again lagged and it apparently was discontinued for several summers.

In the year 1893 the J. D. Miller family from Holmes County, Ohio, arrived and settled in the community. The same year Ed Miller, a Mennonite young man, was working in the community, and he aroused interest again for Sunday school. Through his labors Sunday school was organized and held in the Union Brick, now Elmhirst, schoolhouse by the young boys and girls. There were no married people present. Ed Miller was elected the first superintendent, and served until he left for Iowa in the late summer of 1893. Jacob H. Miller was then elected and served the rest of that summer and the summer of 1894 when he married and moved to North Dakota. Dan A. Nisly was then elected and served several summers.

For some time Sunday school was opposed by some people and it was only through faith and the labors of a few that interest was kept alive.

There were a few summers that there was no Sunday school held since it was organized in 1893 to the present time, 1947. So it has been over fifty years that Sunday school has been held by the Old Order congregation southwest of Hutchinson, Kansas.

While there are those who have criticized and opposed the Sunday school, there are also those who have learned things about the Bible. So, at the present time, the Sunday

school continues. We believe it is a great help to strengthen the brotherhood and teach our children the great truths of the Bible.

### SUNDAY SCHOOL AT PRESENT

Our Sunday school at present is opened with two songs. The *Lieder Sammlung* song books are used. Then a portion of Scripture is read and prayer held, classes are formed, and the lesson read which is two or three chapters in the New Testament. After reading the lesson, the superintendent or minister, if there is one present, goes over the lesson discussing and explaining. Then some members are asked to repeat a verse memorized as a golden text from the lesson. There are two questions given two weeks in advance. These are now answered and discussed and the questions given for the next two weeks. The children then have their lesson which is discussed and explained by the children's leader, who is elected in the beginning of Sunday school in the spring.

Sunday School is still held in the "Elmhirst" schoolhouse by the East Center Old Order Amish Mennonite Congregation. The Northwest and Southwest congregations have a schoolhouse of their own to conduct Sunday school and German day school.

Among those who have served as superintendents of the "Elmhirst" Sunday School are: Ed Miller, Bishop Jacob H. Miller, Pre. Dan A. Nisly, David M. Yoder, Jerry J. Troyer, Eli N. Helmut, Dan M. Miller, Bishop Levi Helmut, Sam M. Beachy, Eli N. Yutzy, Roman N. Mast, Eli L. Helmut, Dan M. Yoder, Val J. Headings, Jr. The present superintendent is again Roman N. Mast.

I wish also to acknowledge and thank those who have helped in getting the facts and data of this brief History of our Sunday school, which is as nearly correct as seemed possible. Many of those who helped organize the Sunday school have passed on to their reward and as others are getting older their memory is not as keen as in younger years.

It is our wish and our prayer that this brief history will be an inspiration to those of the future generation, and may our Sunday school continue until our Lord returns.

Living in the midst of the American culture in a world bristling with projectiles is no light assignment for a Christian, but we are not to assume that we are more Christian by distaining it.—Roland H. Bainton, *Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision*.



## NORTHERN INDIANA CHURCHES

(Continued from Page 6)

been modified at Riverview, as stated, and more recently also at Townline. Very little is said about other modern inventions except to emphasize simplicity and good stewardship.

Most of the members have only a grade school education. Recently, more are going through the ninth and tenth grades, but relatively few complete high school. A few have gone on to college. Quite a few of the young people attend Winter Bible school at the Conference-sponsored Bible school in Ohio. In the last few years a much more encouraging attitude has been manifested toward higher education.

Farming is probably the vocation of the majority of families but many work in the carpenter trade and in factories. Quite a number are salesmen and truck drivers or laborers of other types. A few might be classed as semi-professionals. Several members have their own businesses.

The greater percentage of the membership in the congregations presently have either come from the Amish, or their parents or grandparents did. Only a few are members who do not have a Mennonite background. In a few cases persons from more liberal Mennonite groups have joined with one of the congregations, but usually they come from the Amish church or move into the community from other areas where they attended a Conservative church. From time to time members leave the churches to join a more liberal Mennonite group or another church. Especially does this seem to be true of young brethren and some young sisters. They are baptized in the Conservative Church but once they are big enough to leave home they go elsewhere, mostly to another Mennonite church.

A spiritual atmosphere and a hospitable attitude are present in the churches. Most of the members respond to needs in the brotherhood with financial and other types of assistance. At times of misfortune or special need, evidence of help and concern is usually quickly shown.

It is hoped that an awakened concern will be manifested to the responsibility of bringing Christ to those outside the church. This feeling seems to be shared by numerous members but adequate leadership for the task seems to be one lack in its accomplishment. With the many young people and other resources available one feels that much could be done in this area for the kingdom of God. It is hoped that a later history of these Conservative Churches will reveal that more will have been done than is on record today.

## TABLE OF MINISTERIAL ORDINATIONS

Name	Date and Office to which ordained	Remarks
1. Joseph Bontrager	Min. June 2, 1867	Ordained at Forks—helped form the Townline Cong.
2. John M. Hostettler (Apr. 16, 1839-1914)	Min. Oct. 19, 1876	Ordained at Townline—first ordination there
3. Jonathan J. Troyer (Mar. 8, 1841-May 23, 1930)	Dea. Oct. 14, 1883 Min. 1886 Bish. 1895	Ordained at Townline—served there till his death
4. Christian S. Yoder (Apr. 21, 1845-Feb. 25, 1908)	Dea. 1886	Ordained at Townline
5. Noah Kropf (Dec. 1883- )	Dea. 1911	Ordained at Townline—trans. to Forks in 1913
6. Jeff Troyer	Min. 1913	Ordained at Townline—trans. to Shore Church 1921
7. Christian J. Miller (Oct. 30, 1890- )	Min. 1918	Ordained at Townline—trans. to Amish Church 1924
8. Sam T. Eash (Mar. 1, 1891- )	Min. Nov. 22, 1923 Bish. Nov. 20, 1927	Ordained at Townline—now bishop at Griner
9. Manasses R. Miller (Oct. 14, 1879- )	Min. Oct. 26, 1924	Ordained at Townline—now serving at Griner
10. John J. S. Yoder (Apr. 16, 1884- )	Min. May 16, 1926	Ordained at Townline—now serving at Griner
11. Daniel J. Eash (Apr. 17, 1881- )	Dea. May 15, 1932	Ordained at Townline—still serving there
12. Jonas J. Miller (May 28, 1904- )	Min. Oct. 17, 1937	Ordained at Townline—Served at Townline & Griner—At Riverview since 1954-
13. Noaz Zehr (Oct. 11, 1895- )	Min. Nov. 5, 1933	Ordained at Allen Co., Ind. Served at Griner 1945-1952 At Riverview 1952-
14. Clarence A. Yoder (June 4, 1917- )	Min. Dec. 15, 1948 Bish. Oct. 15, 1950	Ordained at Pleasant Grove Bishop there since 1948 & at Bethel since its beginning Bishop oversight at Townline 1953-1956
15. Eli D. Miller (May 27, 1909- )	Min. Dec. 19, 1948 Bish. Apr. 19, 1956	Ordained at Townline—also bishop there since 1956-
16. Menno Schrock (Aug. 13, 1900- )	Min. May 30, 1935	Ordained at the O. O. Amish Church—trans. to Pleasant Grove in Nov. 1949
17. Fred S. Bontrager (Mar. 22, 1898- )	Dea. Oct. 21, 1934	Ordained in the Amish Church—trans. to Griner in Aug. 1950
18. Louis Kauffman (May 12, 1915- )	Min. Jan. 14, 1953	Ordained at Griner & serving there
19. Edwin Knepp (Mar. 18, 1929- )	Min. Sept. 2, 1953	Ordained at Pleasant Grove and serving there
20. Homer Miller (Sept. 30, 1924- )	Min. Oct. 17, 1948	Ordained in the Amish Church—trans. to P. G. and serves at Bethel since its beginning
21. Albert H. Miller (Apr. 5, 1919- )	Min. June 10, 1956	Ordained at Griner and serving there
22. Jake Miller (Dec. 21, 1903- )	Min. June 19, 1955	Ordained at Bethel and serving there
23. Calvin Bontrager (Sept. 4, 1936- )	Min. Mar. 8, 1956	Ordained at Townline and serving there

Source: Much information was received from Bishop Sam T. Eash of Middlebury, Indiana. O.T.



# MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

Published quarterly by the Historical Committee of Mennonite General Conference at Scottdale, Pennsylvania, and distributed to the members of the Mennonite Historical Association. **Editor:** Irvin B. Horst; **Office Editor:** John A. Hostetler; **Associate Editors:** Harold S. Bender, Ernest R. Clemens, Melvin Gingerich, Ira D. Landis, Herman Ropp, John W. Snyder, Nelson Springer, Grant Stoltzfus, John C. Wenger, Samuel S. Wenger. Dues for regular membership (\$1.50 per year) or for sustaining membership (\$5.00 or more annually) may be sent to the treasurer of the Association, Ira D. Landis, R. # 1, Bareville, Pa. Articles and news items should be addressed to the editor, Irvin B. Horst, Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Va.

Vol. XX

JULY, 1959

No. 3

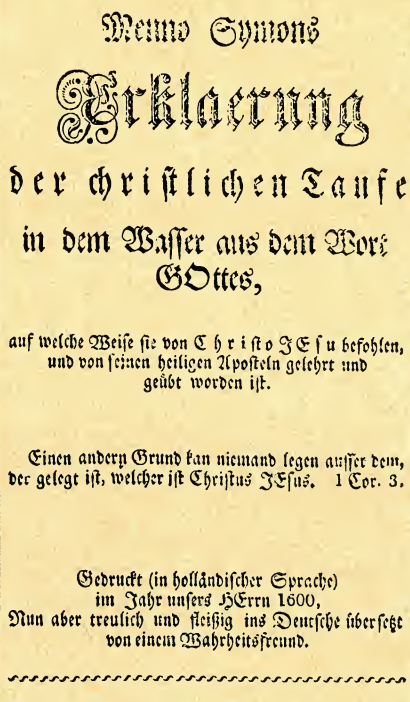
## An Unrecorded Edition of Menno Simons' Tract on Christian Baptism

IRVIN B. HORST

The writings of Menno Simons have gone through three stages in regard to their printing history. Originally they appeared as separate tracts much in the form of modern day pamphlets. Some of them were reprinted during Menno's lifetime. By 1562, however, they took the form of a handbook in which the *Fundament-Boek* (Foundation of Christian Doctrine), his most important work, appeared along with seven other writings. This handbook was reprinted many times in the 16th century in Dutch and in German translation. It was brought to America and reprinted here in German as well as in English translation. A third stage was reached in the Netherlands with the publication of the collected writings, in various stages of completeness, in 1600, 1646, and 1681. In America the collected writings appeared first in English, *The Complete Works of Menno Simon* (Elkhart, 1871), and later in German, *Die vollstaendigen Werke Menno Simon's* (Elkhart, 1876-1881), 2 vols. *The Complete Writings of Menno Simons* (Scottdale, 1956), is the most definitive edition of his collected works.

Individual tracts of Menno, then, were seldom reprinted after the early period. Menno's account of his conversion and renunciation of Rome appeared often as a separate work, but this was actually an excerpt from one of his longer books, *Reply to Gellius Faber* (1554). The reprint, *Tractaten over den doop, het avondmaal, enz.* (Amsterdam, 1892), by C. P. van Eeghen, Jr., consisted of excerpts from the *Foundation of Christian Doctrine*.

A reprint which has recently come to light is a German translation of Menno's book on baptism, *Verclar- inghe des christelycken doopsels*, which first appeared in 1539. This edition is without an imprint, that is, without the place or date of publication and the name of the publisher. An examination of the typography and the signatures of the gatherings shows clearly that it is



Facsimile of the title page of Menno Symons, *Erklärung der christlichen Taufe*, a German translation and separate edition published in America in the 19th century. It has no imprint to indicate the place and date of publication and the publisher. For a discussion of this unrecorded edition of Menno Simons' work on Christian baptism see the accompanying article. The facsimile shown here is from the copy in the Historical Library at Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Virginia.

an American imprint from the 19th century, probably from before the Civil War. The title page carries the following explanation about the translation: "Gedruckt (in holländischer Sprache) im Jahr unsers Herrn 1600, Nun aber treulich und fleißig ins Deutsche uebersetzt von einem Wahrheitsfreund." The only Dutch edition of 1600 which contains this tract on baptism is the collected edition, *Sommarie ofte by een vergaderinge van sommige schriftelijcke Bekentenissen des Gheloofs*, published at Hoorn in 1600. This separate American reprint uses "y" in the spelling of "Menno Symons," as does the Dutch edition of 1600, which may provide another clue as to the source used for the translation, although both of the later col-

(Continued on Page 2)

## The 1868 Meeting of Ohio Mennonite Conference

(Wilmer D. Swope, Leetonia, Ohio, copied this report of the 1868 Ohio Mennonite Conference from an undated but recent reprint published by the Wisler Mennonites of Ohio. This report had not appeared in the *Herald of Truth*, and its existence was not generally known. Brother Swope deserves the credit for bringing this to our attention. Ed.)

The annual conference of the Mennonites in Ohio, according to previous appointment, was held on the 15th day of May, 1868 in Nolt's (NOLD'S) Meeting-house, in Columbiana County, where more than 30 Bishops, Ministers, and Deacons were present from Ohio, Indiana, and Canada. The following is the decision of this conference:

1st. Ministers shall seek diligently to conduct themselves and keep house according to the Word of God.  
 2nd. The non-resistant doctrine shall in all things be strictly upheld and carried out, not only in taking up the sword or using the authorities, etc., but in our whole walk and conduct.

3rd. All ministers shall be careful in receiving applicants into the church, that they be not too fast in baptizing them before good works or fruits do appear, true repentance and a change of heart shown in their conduct.

4th. In choosing ministers the attention of the church shall be drawn thereto and shall seek for men who are intelligent, well grounded in the faith, and who lead a godly and zealous life. Then in the fear of the Lord shall votes be taken, and those who are voted for be examined to see whether they are well grounded in the faith and doctrine, then shall the Lot be cast for the desired member.

5th. When a brother or sister of our church shall marry a person who is not a member, it shall be acknowledged as a transgression not only against the rules of the church, but also against the gospel; such

(Continued on Page 2)



## THE 1868 MEETING

(Continued from Page 1)

shall they confess before they are received into membership again.

6th. In regard as to whether a brother or sister in case of adultery one or the other may be divorced, was unanimously considered that we have no permission in the gospel to take a writing of divorce, neither have we (in such circumstances) permission to marry again.

7th. We must be a separate people. We dare not take part in the worldly buying and selling patent-rights.

8th. There shall no custom be made in holding night meetings; but when ministers are on a journey, where there are sick, old or infirm persons it shall be allowed.

9th. The rule given in Matthew 18:15-18 shall in all cases be strictly observed where dissatisfaction occurs between brothers or sisters.

10th. Every minister shall seek to labor faithfully in the duties of his own office and not interfere with another office.

11th. Every minister shall be diligent to observe the church rules according to as they have been practiced hitherto, and shall seek to maintain and uphold the same and not bring any new customs.

12th. We also acknowledge the 18 chief articles and as accepted at Dortrecht (Dortrecht) in 1632, as being in accordance, to keep the same faith and ordinance of our church.

13th. The next conference is to be held in Martin's Meetinghouse, the 3rd Friday in May, 1869.

## AN UNRECORDED EDITION

(Continued from Page 1)

lected Dutch editions of 1646 and 1681 have the same spelling.

In regard to the occasion for reprinting this work in America we are left entirely in the dark. Since this tract does not appear in any of the handbook editions of the *Foundation of Christian Doctrine* with the other appended works, there was obviously interest in making available an additional writing by Menno Simons. Aside from this separate imprint American readers were not able to read the work on baptism until the appearance of the complete works in English in 1871 and in German in 1876-1881.

One may surmise that the translation and publication of this tract on baptism had some connection with the controversy between Mennonites and Dunkards, as well as with other groups, regarding the mode of baptism. This is the tract

which some Dunkard leaders used to suggest that Menno taught immersion. In the title of this work and in the text Menno speaks of "*des christelycken doopsels in den Water*." It is a misconstruing of the connotation of these words, however, to suggest that Menno had the method of immersion in mind. The context makes it clear that Menno here means simply "Christian baptism by water." He stated it this way to distinguish from later references in the book to baptism by the Spirit and by fire. The separate American imprint gives prominence to this terminology, particularly in the first main subtitle of the book where "von der Taufe im Wasser" is printed in large bold type. Neither this imprint nor the recent English collected edition of 1956 provide a literal translation of the Dutch at this point. The German imprint has: "Hier folgt eine Abhandlung von der Taufe im Wasser, und erstlich von dem Befehl Jesu Christi, dieselbe betreffend." The English 1956 edition has "Explanation of Christian Baptism." The original Dutch has, "Verklaringe des christelycken doopsels in den Water uyt 't Woordt Godts." This should be translated no doubt as, "An explanation from God's Word about baptism by water." The American imprint also emphasizes "Befehl Jesu Christi" by spacing the letters of these words. Is it possible that this tract was translated and published by non-Mennonites? The anonymity of the work also prompts this question. The copy of this book here considered, which is now in the Historical Library at Eastern Mennonite College, was found among some old books in an attic at Dayton, Virginia. Was it printed in the Shenandoah Valley at the time of the controversy between Mennonites and Dunkards about the mode of baptism? A comparison of the typography with the Henkel German imprints indicates that it was not printed at New Market. No German books were printed at Singers Glen by Funk & Sons, 1847-1877. It may be an early Harrisonburg imprint, and if so it dates from the early part of the 19th century for no German books were printed at this place after 1820.

One purpose in reporting the existence of this book is to bring it to the attention of curators of rare Mennonite and of scholars who are at home in the field of American Mennonite history. It is not recorded in any bibliography and no copy is at present extant in any of our Mennonite historical libraries. Also, it is not recorded in the Union Catalogue of the Library of Congress. We may therefore speak of it at this stage as unrecorded. Are additional

copies known to exist? What was the occasion for the publication of this pamphlet? Why has it been unknown in Mennonite circles?

A description of the pamphlet is as follows:

*Title Page:* Menno Symons / Erklæring / der christlichen Taufe / in dem Wasser aus dem Wort Gottes, / auf welche Weise sie von Christo Jesu befohlen, / und von seinen heiligen Apostelen gelehrt und / geuebt worden ist. / Einen andern Grund kan niemand legen ausser dem, / gelegt ist, welcher is Christus Jesus. I Cor. 3. / Gedruckt (in hollaendischer Sprache) / im Jahr unsers Herrn 1600, / Nun aber treulich und fleissig ins Deutsche uebersetzt / von einem / Wahrheitsfreund. / [rule]

*Collation:* Octavo (18 cm.), 1-7<sup>6</sup>, 8<sup>3</sup>.

*Pagination:* Paginated from 1 to 90. The first fifteen pages are paginated with Roman and the remaining pages with Arabic numerals.

*Contents:* (p. 1) title page; (p. 2) blank; (pp. 3-4) "(Zuschrift aus dem Lateinischen uebersetzt.) M.S. wuenschet seinen lateinischen Lesern Heil"; pp. 5-15 "Vorrede des Autors"; pp. 15-90 text; p. 90 "Gaudet sponsa Christi." This edition follows closely the text in the Dutch editions of the collected works; however it translates the Latin introduction but not the Latin postscript.

Greatly perturbed the circle of Grebel and Mantz met together. What was to be done? They understood well that much more was involved than the question of infant baptism. They realized that a choice was necessary: either they had to relinquish entirely their ideal of a church after the apostolic pattern and return to the church, which was a State Church, and in their eyes relatively little different from the Church of Rome; or they had to break radically with all that was old and venture further along the new, untried way. What this meant to persons who knew only the medieval conception of authority, we can hardly imagine. To them it meant to oppose every aspect of this authority, every power over them, secular as well as spiritual, and to undermine the central pillar of religious life in the Middle Ages—an uncritical subjection to the Church and the State. This, then, was done. Courage was present, or, rather, faith was great enough to reverse the sails and steer against the stream.

—N. Van der Zijpp, *Geschiedenis der Doopsgezinden*, p. 12.



## Mennonite Research News and Notes

MELVIN GINGERICH

William Keeney, assistant professor of Bible at Bluffton College, received his Ph.D. degree *cum laude* from Hartford Theological Seminary on May 20. He did his work in historical theology and wrote his dissertation on "The Development of Thought and Practice Among the Dutch Anabaptists from 1539 to 1564." In 1957 he completed a master's thesis on Dirk Philips, His Life, His Writings and His Teaching Concerning the Church."

University of Manitoba degrees granted on May 20, 1959, included the following:

Victor John Peters, "All Things Common—The Hutterians of Manitoba," M.A. degree;

John Jacob Bergen, "An Historical Study of Education in the Municipality of Rhineland," M. Ed.

Indiana University granted the Ph.D. degree to Mary Eleanor Bender on June 8, 1959. Her dissertation topic was "The Sixteenth-Century Anabaptists as a Theme in Twentieth-Century German Literature (1900-1957)."

Peter F. Barga has completed a Ph.D. dissertation on the Mennonites of Alberta at the University of Alberta.

The July 1959 *Mennonite Quarterly Review* contains a thirty-five page extract from Herbert Klassen's master's thesis. The article is entitled "The Life and Teachings of Hans Hut."

John C. Wenger concluded his study of "Jacob Wisler and the Old Order Mennonite Schism of 1872 in Elkhart County, Indiana" in the July 1959 *Mennonite Quarterly Review*.

The first two secretary books of General Conference which had been thought lost recently came into the possession of the Mennonite Church Archives. They cover the years 1897-1935.

Mrs. J. N. Smucker, Goshen, Indiana, recently donated a collection of photographs and portraits to the Mennonite Church Archives. These came from the home of her father Melvin Lantz (1867-1957), Topeka, Indiana.

The J. N. Durr (1853-1934) papers and historical documents have recently been deposited in the Mennonite Church Archives.

The widow of the late Huber Yoder, Elkhart, Indiana, recently deposited with the Archives, a collection of Jonas S. Hartzler (1857-1953) materials. Brother Yoder had been

working on a biography of J. S. Hartzler at the time of his untimely death.

The Jacob Burkhard (1873-1906) letters written from India in 1902-03 and until recently in the possession of his widow Mary Burkhard have been donated to the Mennonite Church Archives by their son Samuel T. Burkhard of Worthington, Ohio.

The May 1959 number of *The Palimpsest* is devoted to "The Mennonites in Iowa" by Melvin Gingerich. In this work Dr. Gingerich condenses and brings up to date his book on the same subject. An added feature is the large number of photographs of historical note. Copies may be obtained from the State Historical Society, Iowa City, for the price of fifty cents each. (I.B.H.)

### Gabriel Sager (1734-1816), Pioneer Ohio Mennonite Preacher

Gabriel Sager, son of Baltzer and Elizabeth Sager, was born in Bavaria or Baden, Germany, July 24, 1734, a weaver by trade and Mennonite preacher; died Jan. 31, 1816; married April 8, 1762, Margaretta Delphin, daughter of John and Margaret Delphia, born in Klein Biberau, Germany, Sept. 26, 1737, died Aug. 28, 1822. According to Isaac W. Sager, Gabriel Sager accompanied by four brothers, Jacob, Adam, John and Philip, came to America in 1756, and settled in New Jersey. Soon thereafter they settled in Bucks Co., Pa., and on Sept. 27, 1765, Gabriel was naturalized by the Commonwealth of Pa. (the certificate being now in the possession of one of the direct descendants, Frank J. Sager, Carizozo, New Mexico). He lived in Bucks Co., at least ten years, how much longer is unknown, then moved to Shenandoah Co., Va., and from there to N. Bristol, Trumbull Co., Ohio, in 1808, where he and his wife died. They had eight children, the fourth being William, who preceded him to Ohio. Gabriel when a young man made several trips to America. On one occasion the vessel was driven northerly by the winds out of its course and another time it was pursued by whales. They were diverted by throwing empty barrels into the sea. Escaping this peril they confronted hunger. Their stock of provisions became exhausted and they were driven to eat rats that infested the ship.

Finally after a stormy voyage of 18 weeks they reached their port.

On the fourth of June 1805, Mr. and Mrs. Sager with their son Joseph, three years of age, settled at N. Bristol, Ohio, where there were less than half dozen families living then and very few in adjoining townships. Tired, and worn from the long trip they went to the home of Mr. Sager's brother-in-law, Abraham Baughman, for their first night's rest in the wilds of northeastern Ohio. The next morning the two men blazed their way through the forest to select a site for Sager's future home. A farm of 350 acres was purchased from Alfred Wolcott. A part of the purchase price, \$300.00, was brought from Virginia in silver dollars. Sager loaned his saddle bags to Wolcott to carry this money away. While waiting for a log house to be constructed the family lived for four weeks in the covered wagon or moving van which they brought with them from Virginia. There was not a sawed piece of wood in the building. The floor, roof and doors were all made of puncheons split from the surrounding timber. The cabin was 18 by 20 feet and had but one room, yet when half the floor was laid, the family moved in. Their first bedstead occupied one corner. It was made by boring holes in the walls in which were inserted the ends of the side and end rails, the other ends were fastened to the only post used. Some years later Mr. Sager built a commodious frame house which is still in good repair. He built the first flour mill in his township for Abraham Baughman the next year after coming to Bristol, then later built one on his farm for himself, which he operated in connection with his farm work. Mr. Sager's father, Gabriel, a Mennonite minister, organized the first church in Bristol Twp., in 1808, and taught the first school (German) in 1810-11 when he and his brother Samuel and a few others built the first schoolhouse in 1812, where North Bristol now stands. He never identified himself with any local church, but observed the forms of family worship and lived honorably. Formerly family meetings were held in his father's residence. He was of a kindly disposition and was liked by all with whom he came in contact, but he cared little for society and rarely visited his children after their marriage, but always welcomed them at his own home and took great pleasure in their companionship.

[Selected from *History of the Descendants of John Hottel* (Strasburg, Virginia, 1930), by Wilmer D. Swope, Leetonia, Ohio.]



## Book Review

*History of the Pennsylvania Mennonite Church in Kansas.* By Emma King Risser. Published by the Pennsylvania Mennonite Church, Hesston, Kansas, 1958. Pp. xii, 95. \$2.50.

At a time when the nature of the church and the character of our own church life are under serious consideration, one welcomes the appearance of the history of a Mennonite congregation whose spiritual vigor was strong and whose influence in the development of Mennonite life was unusually large. Written by a member who has experienced the life of the congregation through all but about its first two decades, the book gives an intimate insight into the spiritual aspirations and strivings of the group as expressed in the various developing aspects of their congregational life. The very style and underlying spirit of the writing is a representation of the church life being reported. It was the author's purpose to evaluate the happenings about which she reports in the light of her own deep spiritual interests and concerns and to let the book be an added witness to the Christian faith and life which it portrays.

This inside view is given in topical rather than chronological form, each chapter reporting one activity or aspect of the church life through its entire history. Facts and dates are clearly stated for the careful student. A historian might wish for more explicit reference to and interpretation of the various influences that gave impetus to the spiritual life of the group, as well as the impact this congregation has made on the life and activity of the Mennonite church at large, but for the informed Mennonite historian at least some of these are implicit.

The book reveals that beginning in about 1880 Mennonites from Lancaster County and Amish from Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, who came as pioneers to Harvey County, Kansas, formed the Pennsylvania Church, located northwest of Newton. With the Catlin, Spring Valley, and West Liberty congregations in neighboring counties it shared the pioneer Mennonite life of the Kansas prairie. The vision and spirit of its leaders, notably Reuben J. Heatwole, who came from Virginia, early vitalized the life of the congregation. "Uncle Reuben" also was instrumental in bringing in his cousin, John S. Coffman, who with other early evangelists set the tone for the fruitful years of development over the next generation. Local leaders, of whom T. M. Erb was most prominent, caught the spark and carried

on a deep spiritual concern and an aggressive program.

It is evident that the spirit of the Pennsylvania Church has had a wide influence through the missionaries and church leaders who came from this congregation. Although only incidental mention of the school is made in the book, it is known that Hesston College sprang largely from the concern and efforts of the Pennsylvania congregation, with T. M. Erb giving prominent leadership. The forthcoming history of Hesston College by Mary Miller, scheduled to appear in 1959, will supplement the story of the Pennsylvania congregation in this important aspect of its church-wide influence.

The history of the Pennsylvania Church is a grass-roots example of the great awakening in the Mennonite Church, both in its own vital congregational life and in its contribution to this church-wide awakening.

—Paul Bender

*Fiftieth Anniversary of West Clinton-Lockport Mennonite Churches.* Compiled by Orland Grieser, Wauseon, Ohio, 1958. Available from Home Book Store, 404 Brussel Street, Archbold, Ohio. Pp. 32. 65¢.

*Fiftieth Anniversary of the West Clinton Mennonite Church.* Compiled by Orland Grieser, Wauseon, Ohio, 1958. Available from Home Book Store, 404 Brussel Street, Archbold, Ohio. Pp. 20. 55¢.

These booklets were published in conjunction with the fiftieth anniversary of the Lockport and West Clinton congregations in Fulton County, Ohio. The anniversary event was celebrated on October 5, 1958.

In 1908 the agitation for a second meeting house in the west end of the settlement crystallized and resulted in a decision to build a meeting house in the east end as well as the west end. The original church was located in the central area. From these Amish Mennonite beginnings has developed an integrated Mennonite community which today provides a rich opportunity as a laboratory for the study of the constant cultural, social, and economic transition which is occurring in many Mennonite communities.

The pictures of church buildings at various periods are helpful. Even more so are the separate calendars of events. A map showing the locations of the several congregations would help the unfamiliar reader. There are a few mistakes, evidently printing errors, but the compiler, who is a native of the area, is to be commended for making these booklets available at such a strategic time. The treatments are brief, but the reader will want to watch for

the appearance in 1960 of a more complete history of the whole community which is scheduled to coincide with the one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of the Central congregation which is the mother church.

—Samuel L. Horst

*The Fred and Sarah (Yoder) Swartzendruber History: A Story of Their Faith and Life, With Historical, Genealogical and Religious Records of Their Ascendants and Descendants, Gathered from the Earliest Available Data to the Present Time, 1958 A. D.* By Amos Gingerich. Published by the author, Parnell, Iowa, 1958. Pp. 180, illustrations, index. \$5.00.

This Swartzendruber family history will be of interest to a wider range of readers than those whose names appear in its genealogical lists for in addition to the names of Swartzendruber descendants it contains many pages of entertaining and inspiring reminiscences and frontier stories.

It is, however, primarily the story of Frederick Swartzendruber and his family. He was born in Germany in 1825 and died in Iowa in 1895. His wife Sarah was born in Pennsylvania in 1829. Among the 303 descendant living families whose religious affiliations were furnished, approximately eighty per cent are Mennonites. Thirty of the heads of 316 homes listed in the book are ordained men. Of these thirty a considerable number are widely known in Mennonite circles. The Swartzendruber family through the years it has been in America has produced an unusually large number of able leaders, and so this book will be of interest to those who have known these men as well as to those who wish to study home and environmental factors which help produce church leaders.

Other readers will be attracted by the many pioneer stories appearing in the chapters of reminiscences. These accounts are written mostly by the grandchildren of Frederick Swartzendruber. Among them are sketches from D. B. Swartzendruber, Delila Litwiler, Samuel Kreider, Simon Gingerich, S. C. Yoder, and others. A document of unusual worth is the travel diary of 1833 describing the trip across the Atlantic, written by a member of the travel party. Another valuable document is "Mother's Story," written years ago by J. F. Swartzendruber, describing pioneer life in Iowa. This well written account has previously appeared in several periodicals and ranks high in literary quality.

—Melvin Gingerich



# MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

Published quarterly by the Historical Committee of Mennonite General Conference at Scottdale, Pennsylvania, and distributed to the members of the Mennonite Historical Association. **Editor:** Irvin B. Horst; **Office Editor:** John A. Hostetler; **Associate Editors:** Harold S. Bender, Ernest R. Clemens, Melvin Gingerich, Ira D. Landis, Herman Ropp, John W. Snyder, Nelson Springer, Grant Stoltzfus, John C. Wenger, Samuel S. Wenger. Dues for regular membership (\$1.50 per year) or for sustaining membership (\$5.00 or more annually) may be sent to the treasurer of the Association, Ira D. Landis, R. # 1, Bareville, Pa. Articles and news items should be addressed to the editor, Irvin B. Horst, Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Va.

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OCTOBER, 1959

No. 4

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Nelson P. Springer

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